

# ASSOCIATION OF BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS

Representing City and County Governments of the San Francisco Bay Area



July 31, 2008

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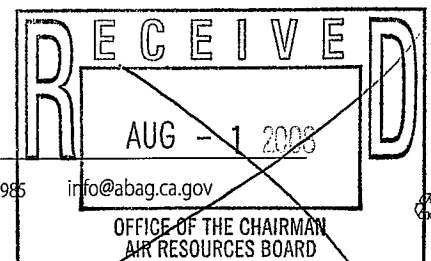
The Honorable  
Mary D. Nichols  
Chair, California Air Resources Board  
1001 "I" Street  
P.O. Box 2815  
Sacramento, CA 95812

Dear Chair Nichols:

The following comments are in regard to the Climate Change Draft Scoping Plan, prepared by CARB pursuant to AB 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act. As described in the Draft Scoping Plan (DSP) Californians are already responding to the challenge of reducing greenhouse gases. Individuals, municipalities, the private and non-profit sectors are advancing major initiatives in response to the challenge of global warming. Regional agencies are also responding to the challenge and this is particularly true in the San Francisco Bay Area. The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Bay Area's other regional agencies are working in collaboration on a variety of different inter-related initiatives. Notably, our work recognizes that technology alone will not provide the solutions to adequately reduce the Bay Area's and California's carbon footprint.

Our comments are based in large part on the work that we have been doing at the regional level relative to AB 32 implementation. We know, for example, based upon analysis conducted by ABAG, in collaboration with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), on the *Regional Transportation Plan, Transportation 2035: Change in Motion*, that, while there is no silver bullet, land use and pricing make a critical difference in reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and carbon dioxide emissions. Correspondingly, based upon the high level of local government interest in our incentive-based regional blueprint plan, FOCUS, it is clear that if we are to make sustainable land use the rule rather than the exception, incentives for those communities and regions that are doing the heavy lifting are essential.

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We believe that although the Draft Scoping Plan is an important first step toward implementing AB 32 it does not go far enough. Therefore, we offer the following suggestions as outlined below:

**1. Provide a clear distinction between Local Actions and Regional Targets.**

This section is essentially unworkable because it mixes strategies and anticipated authorities. Regional “actions” should be focused on the planning of coordinated land use and transportation developments that contribute to a smaller carbon footprint. The state’s major metropolitan regions have blueprint plans that provide a basis for coordinating regional land use planning and transportation investments with local land use authority. For this approach to be most successful, some package of regulatory incentives and well-conceived penalties is needed. Correspondingly, it is critical that a workable monitoring framework be established at the regional level as VMT reduction goals are not appropriate to set, measure, or monitor at a local level.

**2. Separate local government actions related to non-land use and land-use related climate change actions.**

All measures to address greenhouse gas reductions are important and valuable. Many communities and businesses in the Bay Area have advanced climate action plans related to purchasing, public works fleets, and other municipal efficiency measures and we support their efforts. However, these efforts are distinctly different and in many respects more easily attainable than shifting toward a more sustainable development pattern that by definition requires consideration of a regional context. We recommend defining these actions separately and clearly.

**3. Provide incentives for sustainable land use to move beyond minimum reductions and accelerate land use changes and greenhouse gas reductions.**

Some areas of the state—particularly the Bay Area—have a head start in making the connection between land use and transportation. These regions should be encouraged to do more, faster. The Bay Area’s regional agencies, particularly the MTC, have recognized the power of incentives related to planning and capital infrastructure investments to shift from sprawl inducing auto-oriented development patterns to sustainable transit-oriented development patterns.

To date the State of California has in large part failed to recognize this connection in a meaningful way by coordinating its housing, land use, and transportation funding with the regional blueprint plans in the state’s four major metropolitan areas. In particular we were very disappointed with recent funding awards related to Proposition 1C. Our most urban, transit-oriented communities, including San Francisco, did not receive funding for

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transit and infill-related projects, while projects in suburban and exurban, auto-oriented communities did.

We believe that an "aspirational" land use target of at least 4 MMT by 2020 should be set and incentives should be directed to those regions of the state that are committed and have the capacity to deliver land use/transportation changes more quickly. The incentive funds should be drawn from existing sources of state infrastructure assistance related to housing, transportation, and infill and transit-oriented development. Given the magnitude of the challenge new funding sources will also be needed.

**4. Establish reduction ranges as the spread between the minimum levels required to achieve the 2020 GHG target and the "aspirational" levels needed to accelerate progress related to the state's 2050 target.**

The proposed greenhouse gas reduction measures outlined in the DSP rely heavily on technological changes and other energy efficiency strategies such as "system-wide efficiency improvements related to goods movement" and the "implementation of Pavley standards" that are very important and will undoubtedly play a major role in advancing the state's AB 32-related goals. However, at this juncture, many of the 2020 target reductions may or may not prove to be attainable. In addition to advancing the land use changes necessary for California to meet its 2050 goals, we recommend expressing all or many of the targets in a range between minimum levels needed to achieve the 2020 GHG target and higher levels that are needed if the state is to advance the collective sea change necessary to achieve the 2050 climate change target.

**5. Articulate the potential connection between the Draft Scoping Plan and SB375.**

Senate President-elect Steinberg has authored legislation that would essentially require the incorporation of AB 32 regional CO<sub>2</sub> targets into Regional Transportation Plans, and the development by regional agencies of a land use and transportation strategy (Sustainable Communities Strategies) consistent with regional targets. This approach has the potential to significantly advance the significant connection that is being established here in the Bay Area through FOCUS, our regional blueprint plan, and the region's transportation plan. Both ABAG and MTC support the legislation.

SB 375 states that regional targets are to be set by CARB consistent with AB 32 for 2020 with targets in later years adjusted outward to 2050. This legislation provides an implementation tool for coordinated land use and transportation investments. If SB 375 is enacted, we support CARB taking a leadership role and would look forward to working with CARB to implement the bill. We also encourage CARB to consider the Bay Area a "pilot program region" for the implementation of SB 375 given our relative progress in

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connecting land use and transportation and the widespread support in the region among policymakers and citizens for addressing climate change.

We also believe that even without the framework of SB 375, CARB should work with the Bay Area's regional agencies and ensure that State investments in the Bay Area fully support the FOCUS strategies for sustainable development patterns. The regional agencies are already focusing regional investments on locally supported strategies for VMT reduction. The State's investment should augment and leverage regional and local investment strategies and programs.

In closing, we applaud the Clean Air Resources Board for all of the hard work that has gone into the development of the Draft Scoping Plan. Developing this plan for our immense state is an enormous task and we greatly appreciate your efforts. We hope you will carefully consider our recommendations as we believe these changes would go a long way toward making the plan more successful. We and our partner agencies in the Bay Area look forward to working with you on implementing the plan upon adoption.

Respectfully yours,



Henry L. Gardner  
Executive Director